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Chattanooga Opens Applications for American Rescue Plan Funding; Oversight Board

Equitable Recovery Commission to help guide the disbursement of federal recovery dollars, ensure accountability and transparency

Chattanooga, Tenn. (Tuesday, Oct. 26) — The Kelly Administration on Tuesday began accepting funding requests for Chattanooga's \$38.6 million portion of the American Rescue Plan through an online portal at Recovery.Chattanooga.gov, kicking off a process expected to continue through fiscal year-end, June 2022. Applications for funding requests will close on Jan. 6, 2022.

The city's approach is to invest, as opposed to merely spend, Chattanooga's portion of federal pandemic-relief dollars, leveraging a once-in-a-generation opportunity to build lasting solutions that will spark generational community change.

To help guide the investment process through an equity lens, the City of Chattanooga will take applications at Recovery.Chattanooga.gov for those wishing to serve on a 12-member Equitable Recovery Commission. The Commission, established in partnership with the Chattanooga Area Chamber of Commerce and the Urban League, will be tasked with developing a set of clear priorities to inform and guide the Kelly administration's investment plan. The deadline for interested residents to apply for service on the commission is Nov. 10; successful applicants will be asked to serve through the first half of 2022.

All residents, regardless of whether they wish to serve on the commission or apply for funding, are invited to visit the city's [ARP portal](#) and complete [a brief survey](#), open until Nov. 23, on how they feel recovery dollars should be invested in Chattanooga. Survey results will be used to steer the initial direction of the Equitable Recovery Commission and serve as a reference for city staff throughout the process.

"The American Rescue Plan serves as an opportunity to catalyze lasting positive change in our city, for generations to come, with a focus on communities disproportionately affected by an extraordinary public-health emergency," said Chattanooga Mayor Tim Kelly. "Chattanooga's needs far exceed the size of this or any federal recovery program, so while we'll have to make some tough decisions, I've directed my staff to provide a transparent, equitable, and accountable process that's worthy of our residents' trust and confidence."

Chattanooga's investment-minded lens for its recovery process means that, while many projects will not receive funding from the city's portion of the American Rescue Plan, in some cases those projects could be a better fit for support from surrounding jurisdictions or other organizations that also received ARP

dollars. In some cases city staff will work with partner municipalities and agencies to find the right fit for projects the city is unable to fund under its federal dispensation.

Projects are also subject to [federal spending rules](#) that control and limit expenditures to certain categories such as COVID-19 mitigation efforts, economic impacts, infrastructure investments, crime prevention and mental health issues.

Using this ARP process as a blueprint for leveraging community engagement in municipal budgeting discussions, the City of Chattanooga will build a model for ongoing public participation in a portion of city expenditures during future-year budget cycles.

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